


THOUGHTS
WITHOUT WORDS



Clarence Day



MILLS COLLEGE
LIBRARY



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2023 with funding from
Kahle/Austin Foundation

THOUGHTS WITHOUT WORDS



Of course a few words have crept in, after all. Like flies, buzzing around each of the pictures. But perhaps they will be needed, as translations, for some of the drawings.

OTHER BOOKS BY
CLARENCE DAY



THIS SIMIAN WORLD
THE CROW'S NEST

THOUGHTS WITHOUT WORDS



BY CLARENCE DAY



New York · ALFRED · A · KNOFF · *London*

19



28

COPYRIGHT 1923, 1928 BY CLARENCE DAY

*With acknowledgments to
The New Republic, The Outlook, The Literary Review
of the New York Evening Post, The Saturday Review of Literature,
and to Harcourt Brace & Co., in whose publications a
few of these drawings have already
appeared*

MANUFACTURED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

PREFACE

THERE are times when a man doesn't care to talk or write to his friends. Times too when that curious wish of his to debate with the gods has quite gone. But even at such times ideas form inside him, like clouds in the sky, and drift aimlessly out of him in some shape—for instance in pictures. And if these appear from some region in him that he doesn't know about, a region that he doesn't understand and perhaps doesn't like, they may interest or surprise him sufficiently for him to preserve some—and that is the best explanation I can give for this book.



v

Mills College Library
Withdrawn

MILLS COLLEGE
LIBRARY

IT'S not that I look down on words at all; they're very useful indeed—queer industrious little things. But they're slow, and they trickle along single-file like stiff wooden soldiers, each bringing in one brick at a time to build up your palaver. . . .

Why should books be like lectures instead of like theatres or movies?

Turn for instance to page 45, "She longed to please." What more could I add if I wrote three hundred pages? This unfortunate woman's hopes, so impossible, so foolish, so fervent; and the philosopher's unutterable remoteness—aren't these things all there?



Some writers may object that they cannot draw. Neither can I. But it isn't works of art that we're speaking of, it's mere picture-writing; and picture-writing was once the most common of habits. All that anyone needs is a legible style.

ALL civilizations end and get buried—some dead, some alive. In the past, the sands did it, as in Egypt. They crept up and up. . . . Today? It is words. We live not among sand-storms but word-storms.

So instead of books that are deserts of words with only a few picture-oases, let us have some that are all green oases, with only a few sandy words.



THE problem remains as to what sized thoughts are best. Large thoughts have a bad effect on writers, to say nothing of readers. They are confusing, they're solemn, they're heavy, they weigh down our spirits. Hence only the most portable sizes have been used in this book.



A Mr. Jenkins—

A Mr. Jenkins owned a brink
On which he used to stand and think
Of heaven above and earth below
And why the world was thus and so.



There is no better place to think
Large thoughts than on a quiet brink;
But Mr. J's became so vast,
So super-cosmic, that, at last,

While grappling with what God had wrought,
He got com-pletely Lost in Thought.

HE disappeared without a sound,
And—what is worse—was never found.



READER, I do not say that you
Or I would disappear from view
If we should let *our* thoughts expand,
But—let us keep them well in hand.

THE author has evidently been thinking when he wrote it . . . not in words but inwardly. The benevolent reader is compelled to think too, and it is so great a relief to the reader to get out of wordiness that he can put up with anything.

JAMES CLERK MAXWELL

THE Chinese artist draws ideas, poems, philosophy . . . He does not draw what he sees but what he thinks. He does not need to know anatomy to express his idea.

C. LE ROY BALDRIDGE

(as quoted by Harry Hansen)

THERE is an outer eye that observes, and there is an inner eye that sees.

ROBERT EDMOND JONES

EVERY literaryism fritters away a scrap of the reader's patience . . . What one really feels and thinks, one stammers with simple speech.

EZRA POUND

THE intellect is powerless to express thought without the aid of the heart and liver and of every member. Of en I feel that my head stands out too dry.

THOREAU

"AH, milord: you would hide thoughts in words and so disguise their naked meanings."

BEYLE, *to Byron*

CONTENTS

THOUGHTS ON PECULIAR DAWNS

A Mother's Dreams	3
The Light of Intellect	4
Mother and Daughter	5
The Egg	6
An Earlier Eden	7
Virgin Birth	8

THOUGHTS ON THE ITCH

Chez la Magdalène	11
Jealousy	12
Tell me, Hermit	13
All Men are Devils	14
Oh, Why the Frown	15
The Proper Villain	16
Passion and Purity	17
The Spinster	18
Who Loves Too Much	19
They Never Stop	20

THOUGHTS ON BONDAGE

Duty	23
The Good Provider	24
The Helpmate	25
Wife and Home	26
Wedlock	27

After the Battle	28
One Flesh	29
The Maternal Instinct	30
Los Angeles	31
The Liar	32

THOUGHTS ON ENDLESS CONFLICTS

A Man Convinced against his Will	35
Never Think a Hero Waits	36
Man's a Hunter	37
The Dryad's Father	38
New Regime	39
He Who Reasons	40
Liberal and Conservative	41
The Modern Bogey	42
The Haves and the Have-Nots	43
Force of Character	44
She Longed to Please	45
The Inspiring Wife	46

THOUGHTS ON WOMEN

Laura's Bower	49
Not All Madonnas	50
Not All Seducers	51
You Never Can Tell	52
Be Good, Sweet Maid	53
Chivalry	54
Women are a Riddle	55
The Elderly Venus	56
Never the Twain	57

Lady and Cat	58
Serpent and Bird	59
Beauty's Soul	60

THOUGHTS ON OTHER DISAPPOINTMENTS

The Queerie	63-4
The Alibi	65
Doles	66
So This is Man	67
The Money-loving Mole	68
Sitting Tight	69
The Story of his Life	70
Inspiration	71
Flattery	72
Insight	73
Mark my Words	74
Not to the Swift	75
Reform Destroying Graft	76

THOUGHTS ON JOYS AND TRIUMPHS

Resurrection	79
Glamor	80
Original Sin	81
A Dream of Beauty	82
On the Door-step	83
Dictator	84
The Pacifist	85
Sudden Wealth	86
Peace of Mind	87
Aim High	88

The Home-Coming	89
Imperturbe	90
The Dance	91
Murder	92

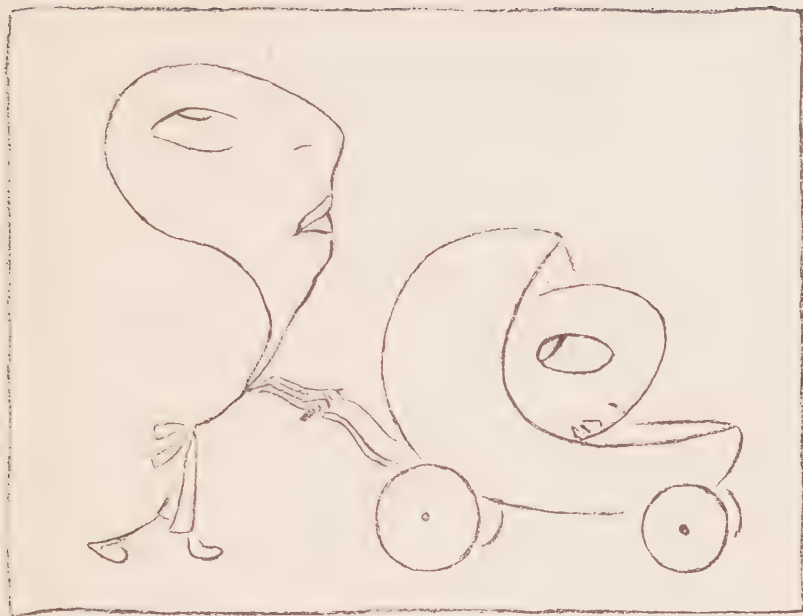
THOUGHTS ON GODS AND DEVILS

God's in His Heaven	95
Tempted	96
Genesis	97
My Heart is Sick	98
Religious Hate	99
Grandma Green	100
The Rev. J. Adolphus Bite	101
Bishop Pettifog	102
Pan and Mr. Pompous	103
Crucified	104

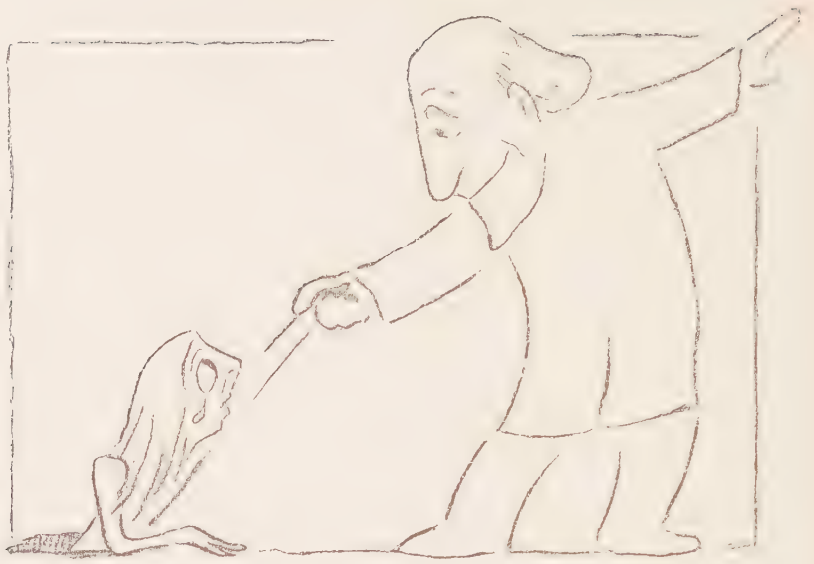
THOUGHTS ON DEATHS

Death is Mean and Fat	107
Séances	108
No Such Place	109
Till Death do us Part	110
To Him Who Waits	111
Never Say Die	112
The Glory that was Greece	113
The Old Chorus-Girl	114
The Old Librarian	115
Longevity	116
Chrysalis	117
A Ghost was Watching	118

THOUGHTS ON PECULIAR DAWNS



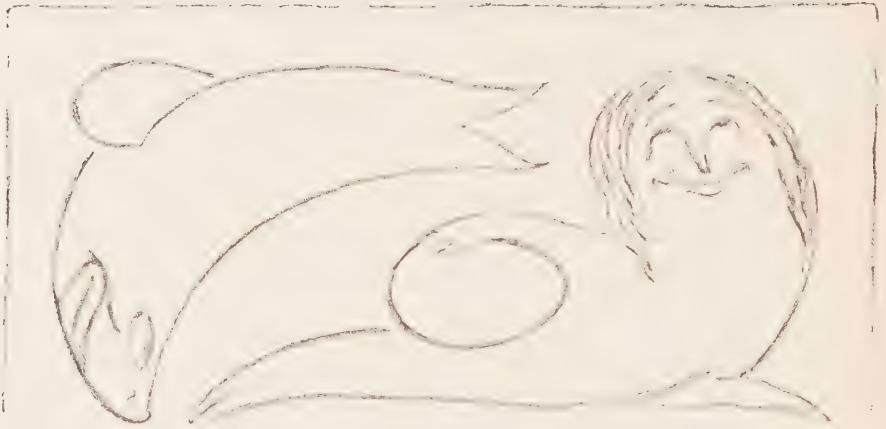
Tender are a mother's dreams,
But her babe's not what he seems.
See him plotting in his mind
To grow up some other kind.



Down in the Pits of Feeling
The Female lies, bedeck'd,
Till Man arrives, revealing
The Light of Intellect.



Mother and daughter as they are
Would make a different picture, far.
But this is how a girl and mother
Appear, at moments, to each other.



Oh who that ever lived and loved
Can look upon an egg unmoved?
The egg it is the source of all.
'Tis everyone's ancestral hall.
The bravest chief that ever fought,
The lowest thief that e'er was caught,
The harlot's lip, the maiden's leg,
They each and all came from an egg.

The rocks that once by ocean's surge
Beheld the first of eggs emerge —
Obscure, defenseless, small and cold —
They little knew what eggs could hold.
The gifts the reverent Magi gave,
Pandora's box, Aladdin's cave,
Wars, loves, and kingdoms, heaven and hell
All lay within that tiny shell.

Oh, join me gentlemen, I beg,
In honoring our friend, the egg.



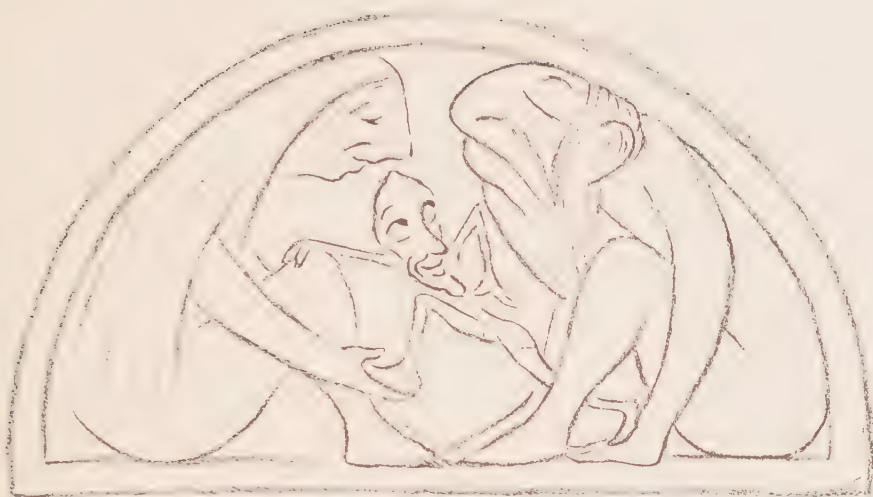
The Garden that gave birth to Man
Was not the first one in the Plan.
No, an earlier Eden lies
Far off, secret, in the skies.

And there, before the Seven Days,
Out of much too hopeful clays,
Mixed with ichors fierce and odd,
Something, once, created God.



The Miracle of Virgin Birth
 Befell when Life began —
When strangely from young Mother Earth
 Came Bird and Beast and Man.
No sons of hers, not even we,
Have solved as yet her mystery.
But still, in every age, we tell
New stories of the Miracle.

THOUGHTS ON THE ITCH



CHEZ LA MAGDALÈNE

Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde,
Nose in the air with polar pride,
Loins aflame with a dungeon'd lust,
Bedding at Dream's-End, in the dust.



Jealousy



“ Tell me, Hermit, could your art
Win for me a lover’s heart? ”

“ Yes, my child; but you’d discover
I myself might be the lover! ”

“ Hermit, Hermit, you surprise
One who thought you old and wise.”

“ But I need to be consoled
Just because I’m wise and old.”

“ Would you fondle me, forsooth,
Were I old and you a youth? ”

“ Maiden, stop your silly chatter.
That is quite a different matter.”

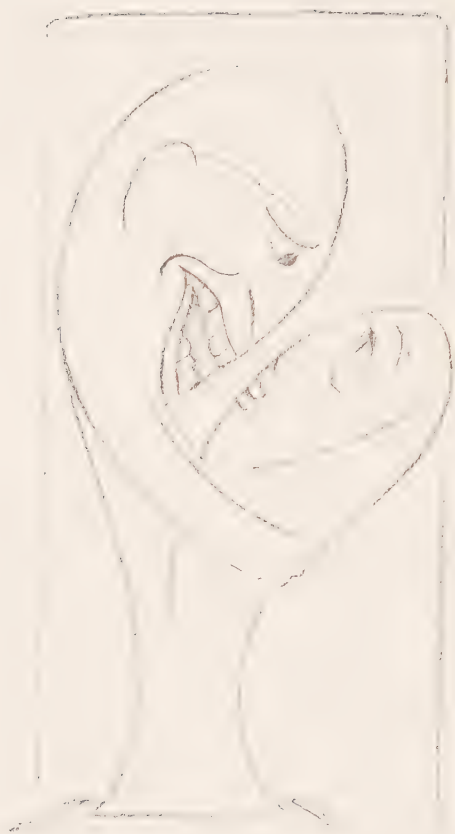


“ He feels obliged to sustain the tradition that all men are devils.”



Oh why the frown, the puzzled stare,
When there is almost nothing there?

But somehow what there is defies
Analysis, however wise.



Every maiden's weak and willin'
When she meets the proper villain.

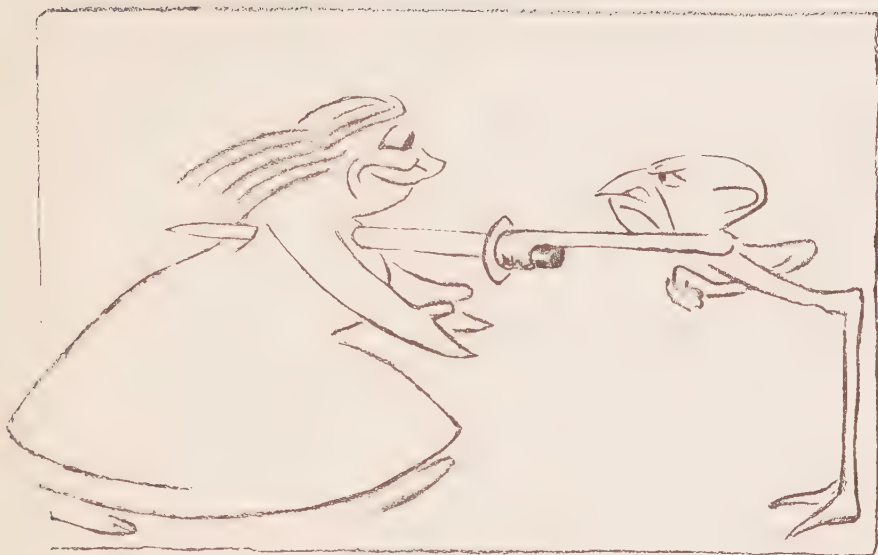


Purity longing for peace and security.
Passion, the prisoner, longing for purity.



THE SPINSTER

Men, they say, are rough and rude,
Men are jeering, men are lewd;
So she trembles, high and dry,
Watching the stream go roaring by.

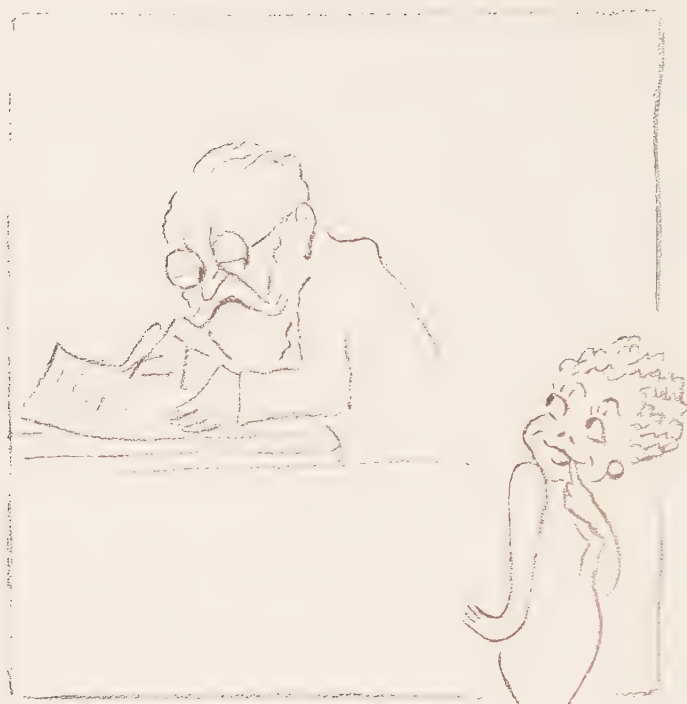


Here's a lass who loves too much.

Here's a lad who's bored.

And ah, dear God, her love is such,

She doesn't feel his sword.



They Never Stop

THOUGHTS ON BONDAGE



“ Stern daughter of the voice of God,”
Like Mary, you’ve a little lamb;
And everywhere you go I plod
Along, O Duty. (Damn.)



THE GOOD PROVIDER

His disillusioned eyes have faced
A truth that youth can never see:
The Law of Love, alas, is based
On¹

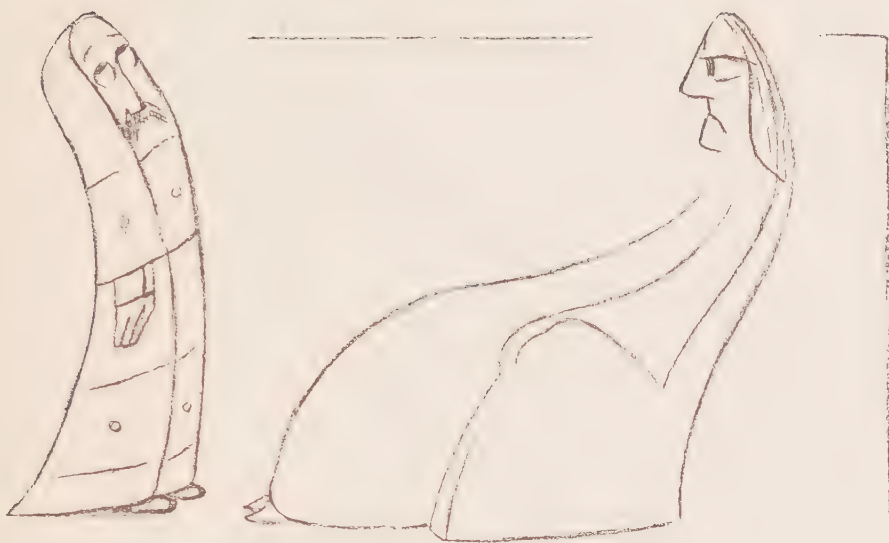
¹ The publisher is offering a prize for the best last line for this stanza.



The Helpmate



Who drags the fiery artist down?
What keeps the pioneer in town?
Who hates to let the seaman roam?
It is the wife, it is the home.



Wedlock



After the Battle



One Flesh



The Maternal Instinct



LOS ANGELES

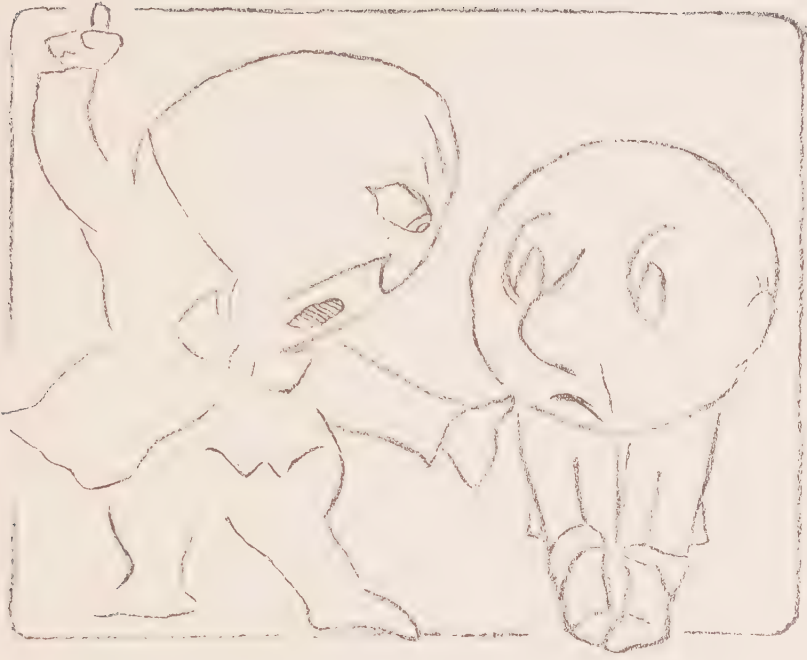
I know a town where the wild cults grow,
Whose priestesses stalk to and fro,
Taking toll by tongue and pen
Of old and innocent business men.



“ The dog returneth to his vomit.
The liar must eat his lie.”

Meredith

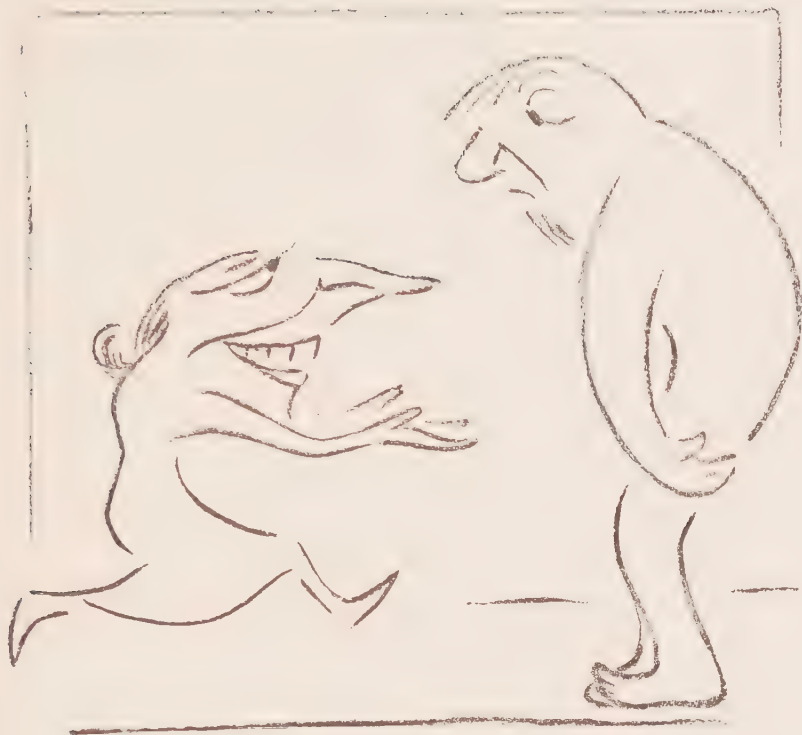
THOUGHTS
ON ENDLESS CONFLICTS



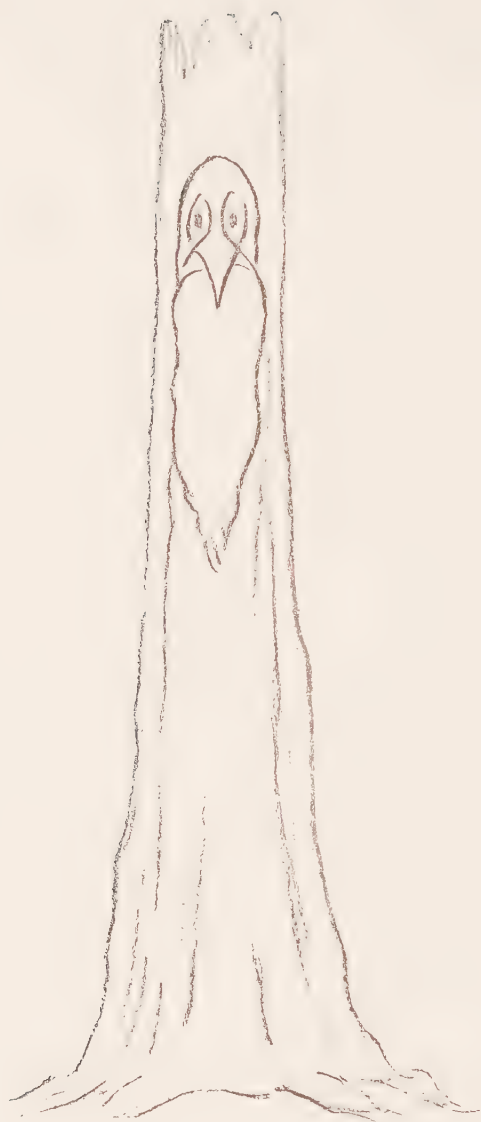
A man convinced against his will
Is of the same opinion still.



Never think a Hero waits
To be guided by the Fates.
On he marches, proud and grim,
Leaving Fate to follow him.



Woman, Woman, can't you wait
Till he hammers at your gate?
Man's a hunter: when he's hunted,
Man is shaken, Man is daunted.



The Dryad's Father
(She is out too late.)



Comfortable lordlings scream
When they see a New Régime —
Ignorant, revengeful, cruel —
Rising for a mortal duel.



Futile, futile, all debate.
Kiss or curse her; love or hate.
He who reasons with a friend
Brings the friendship to an end.

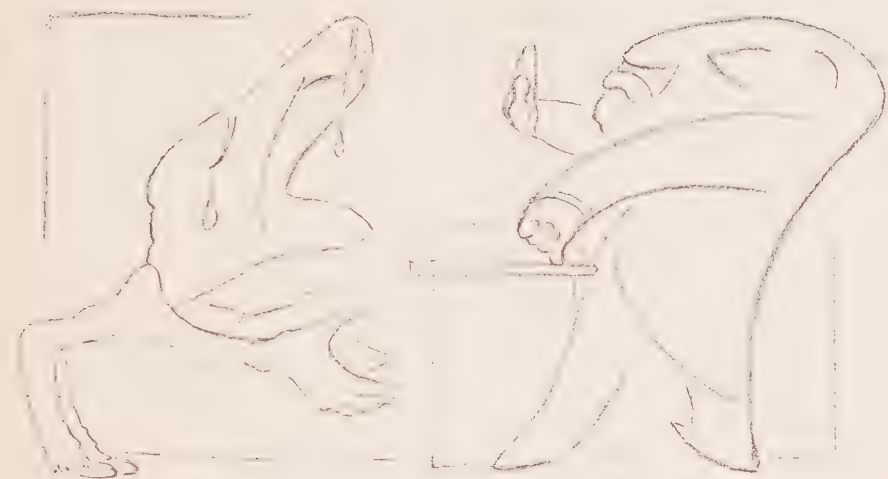


Hark the eager Liberal's cry:
"Thy redemption draweth nigh!
I will teach thee how to live!"
"Halt," says the Conservative.



THE MODERN BOGEY

Ever the preacher hates the rake
And burns to end his revel,
But he warns of a germ to make him squirm
Today, instead of a devil.



“There are only two families in the world: the Haves and the Have-nots.”

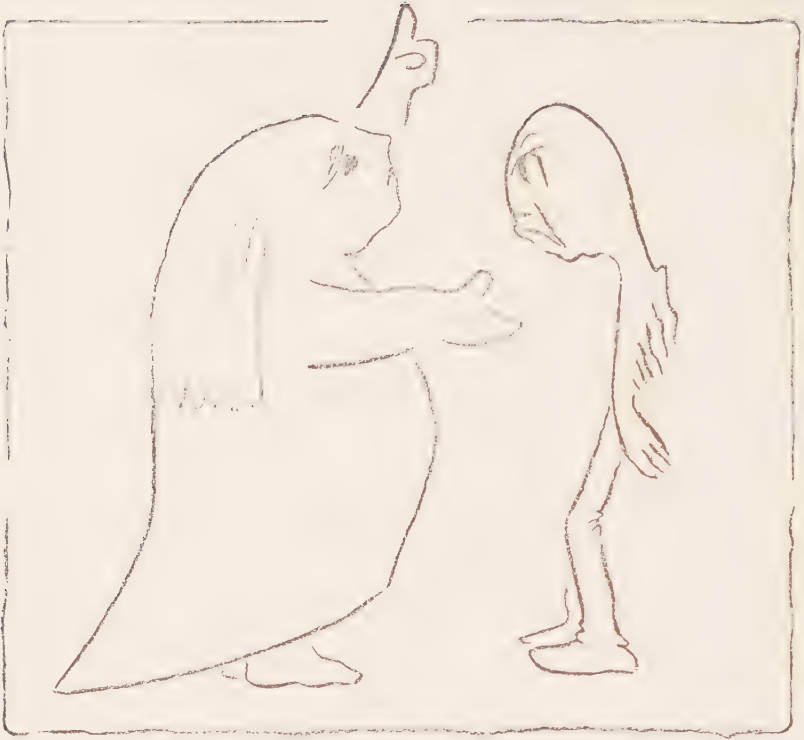
Cervantes



Force of Character



She longed to please



THE INSPIRING WIFE

She told him of a Better Land,
She tried to give his spirit wings.
But he could never understand
Her talk of Higher Things.

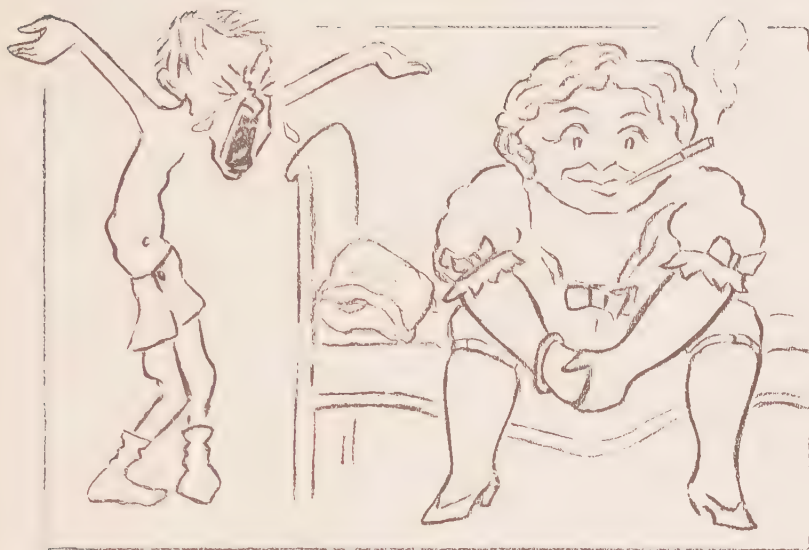
THOUGHTS ON WOMEN



Men, beware how you intrude
On a lady's solitude.
Lately, at an awkward hour,
I invaded Laura's bow'r;
And, to my alarm and awe,
This is what I think I saw.



The roles of the sexes, though neatly assigned,
Seem interchanged now and then.
Not all Madonnas are women, you'll find,
And



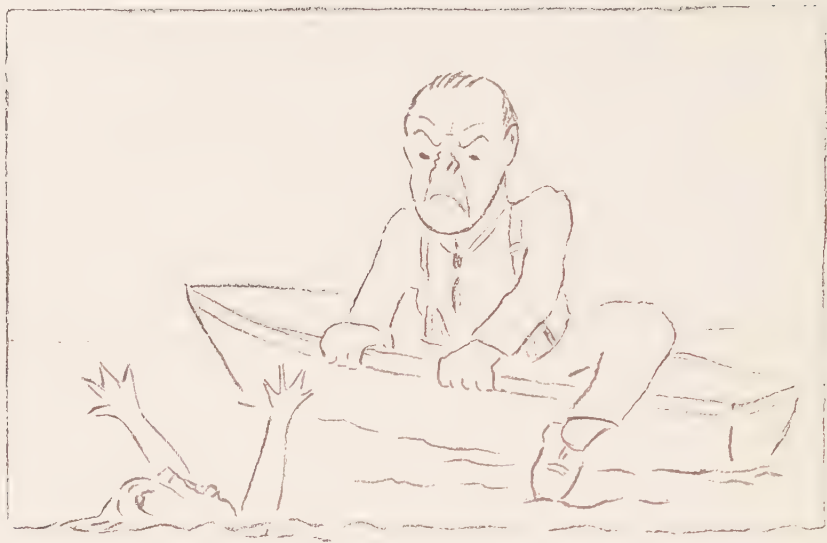
Not all seducers are men



You never can tell



“ Be good, sweet maid, and let who will be clever.”



CHIVALRY

To rescue a damsel in distress
Is an absolute rule of the old noblesse.



Women are a riddle, lad,
No matter which y' choose.
They've always baffled me, bedad,
An' they will baffle youse.



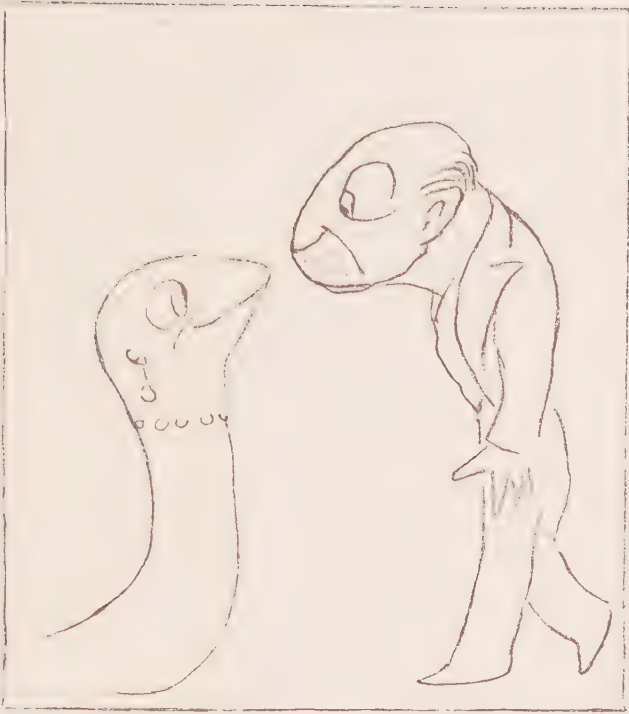
The Elderly Venus



For a he's a he, and a she's a she,
And never the twain shall meet.



Lady and Cat



As the serpent and the bird
Are the woman and the man.
Oh, let him flee who has the power,
For she will prey who can.



Beauty's form and Beauty's face
Charm my senses with their grace;
But my thoughts grow full of dole
When I peer at Beauty's soul.

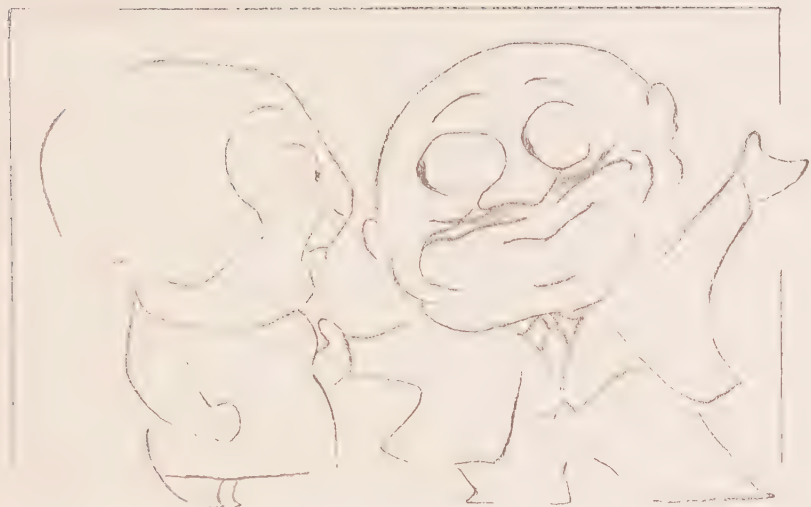
THOUGHTS ON OTHER
DISAPPOINTMENTS



There once was a creature who sat on a rock,
Highly indignant and teary.
He had just suffered a terrible shock —
Some one had called him a Queerie.
“ I always prefer it when people are candid,
But



“What is there queer about ME?” he demanded.



This lady with the stony eye
Is listening to an alibi,
Which its inventor can't conceive
She'll have the heart to disbelieve.



DOLES

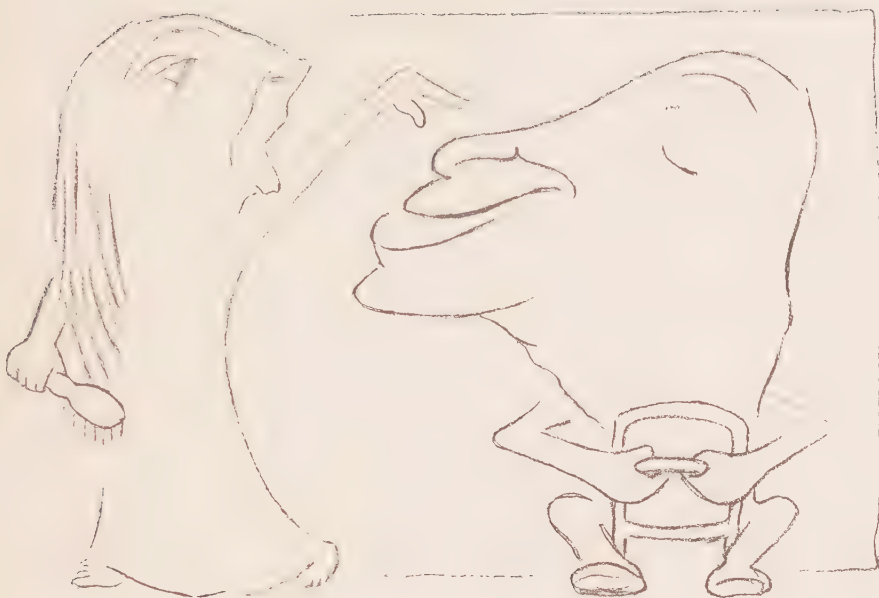
It's a serious, stern, responsible deed,
To help an unfortunate soul in need.
And your one reward, when you quiet his plaint,
Is to feel like an opulent, care-worn saint.



She heard a song: and then appeared
A being who his love bemoaned —
Complacent, self-absorbed and weird.
“ So this is Man,” she groaned.



When a money-grubbing mole
Crawls at last outside his hole,
Honor, shining in the sky,
Seems a splendid thing — to buy.



Sitting Tight



The story of his life



When inspiration, like a bird,
Visits one, it must be heard.
But oh, it's hard when inspirations
Don't come up to expectations.

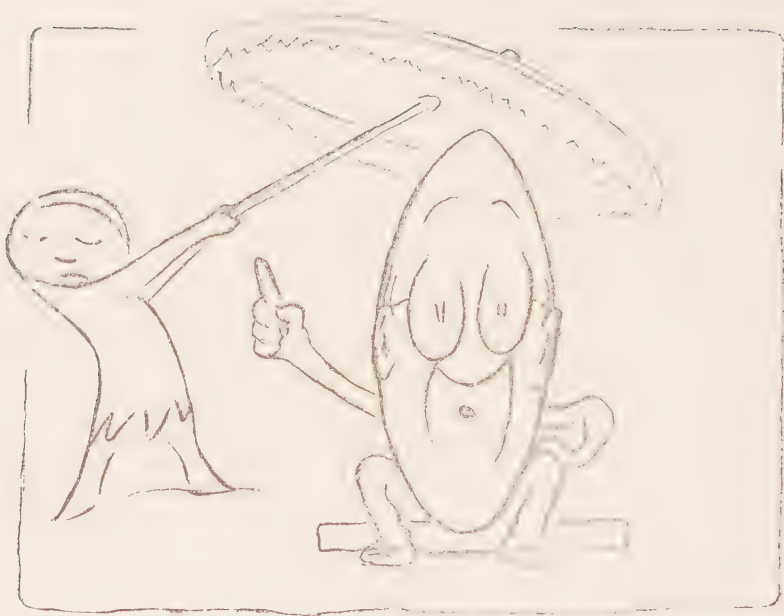
This famous man, who longs to write
Of sin and shame and blackest night,
And heavenly peace, and Helen's lips,
Can only think of vulgar quips.



Flattery, flattery; isn't it sad
That it tastes so good and sets so bad.



The Gift of Insight



“ Mark my words,” the Thinker said,
Wagging his impressive head.
Rumble-bumble went his brain.
“ Mark my words,” he said again.

Thinker, Thinker, shining dark,
Give us something else to mark.



The race is not to the swift

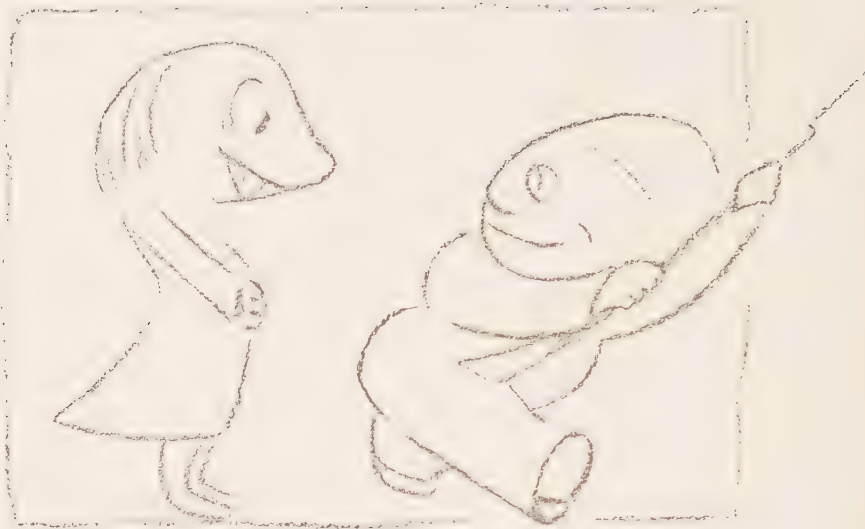


A thousand thousand years ago
The ancients sadly laughed
As we, and at this same old show —
“ Reform destroying Graft.”

THOUGHTS ON
JOYS AND TRIUMPHS

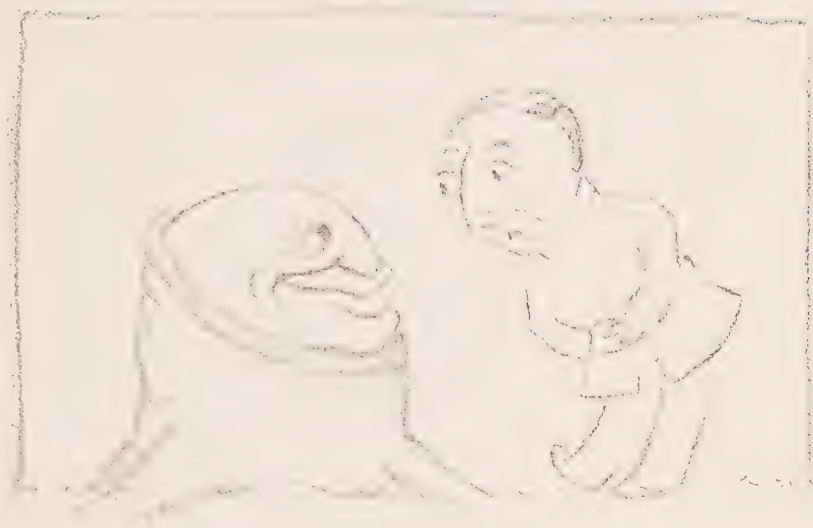


The resurrection of Mrs. Eliza Bainwick Kelly, as imagined by herself.



GLAMOUR

This yokel, though of scanty charms,
Could do the manual of arms
With such a flavor of La Guerre
That, like the brave, he won the fair.



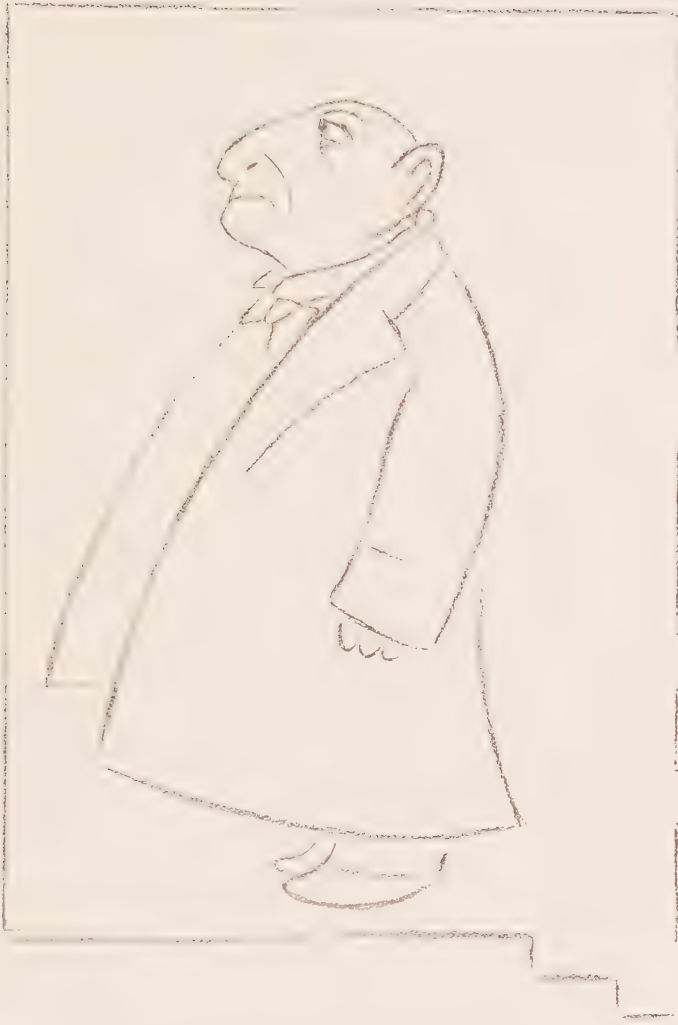
Original Sin once happened to see
A Mr. Chitt. " Good Lord! " said he;
" Tell me, Chitt, do you think it's true
That I'm in everyone — even you? "

" Ahem, ahem," said Mr. Chitt,
" It's a difficult point I must admit.
Your presence should never be understated
But I trust in me you're attenuated."

With a relieved, expansive grin,
" Thank you, Chitt," said Original Sin.



A dream of beauty



Oh the hours on the doorstep,
With his feelings hurt and aching,
That the self-made man
Has to stomach in the making.



Dictator



To Pacifists the proper course
Of conduct is to sit on Force.
For, in their dreams, Force can't resist
The well-intentioned Pacifist.



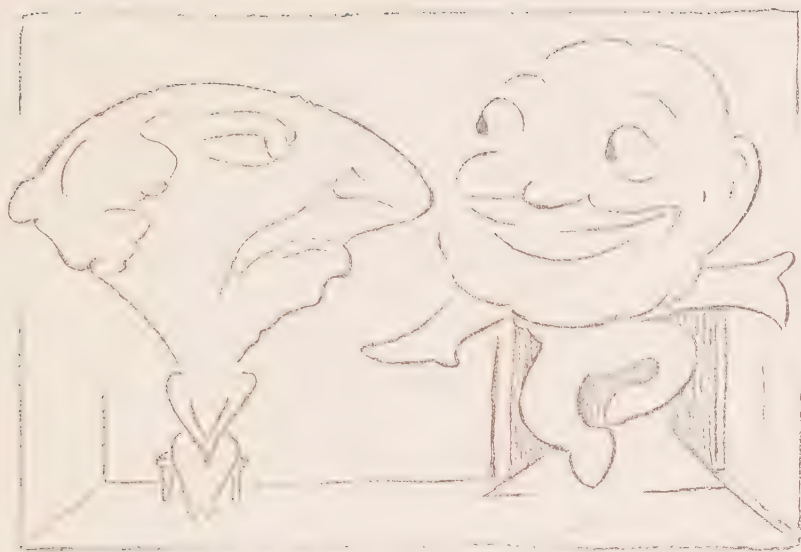
Sudden Wealth



There is no jewel like to peace of mind



Aim High



The Home-Coming



IMPETURBE

The world is full of Snarling Care —
High or low, each has his share.

But see how peacefully the Sage
Bears what he has to bear.



The dance is a form of thought

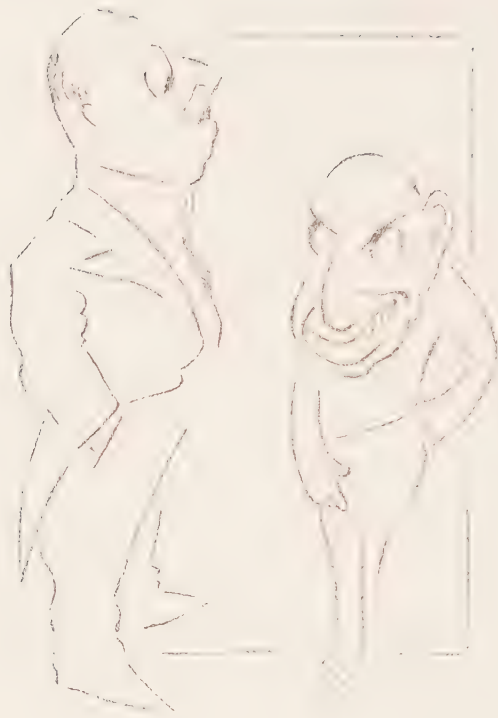


When Murder goes abroad at night
His heart is gay, his step is light.
For he who makes another die
Is as the gods: he spreads the nets
Of fate for mortals — and forgets
His own mortality.

THOUGHTS ON
GODS AND DEVILS



“God’s in his heaven,
All’s right with the world.”



Here's Colonel Parker Chuckle-beaned
A-being tempted by a fiend,
At whom the Colonel blankly stares,
Revolted by his wily airs.

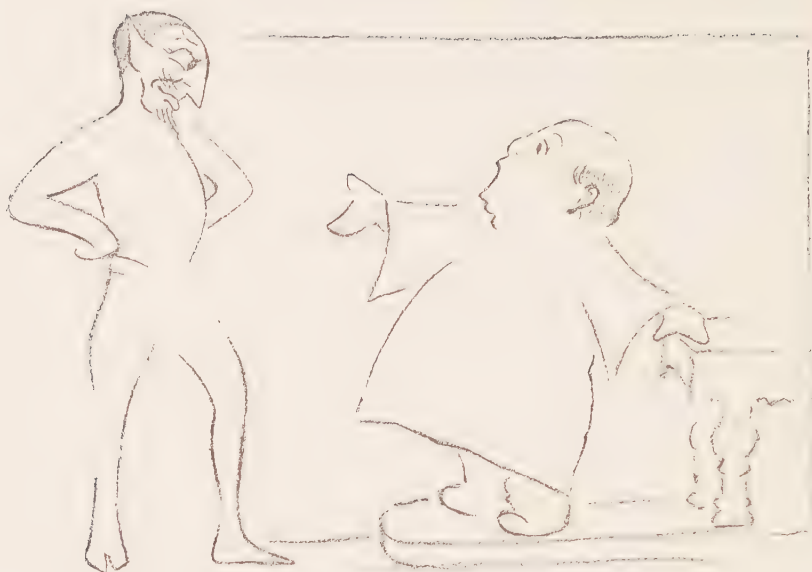
* * * * *

For evil, though we do much ill,
Is foreign to our spirits still.

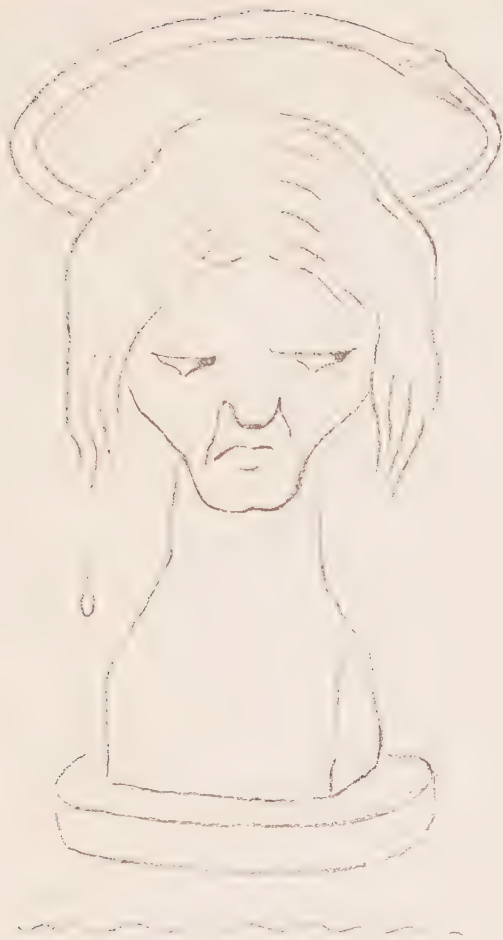


GENESIS

So Adam created two beings. Jehovah and Satan. Yea, in his own image created he them.



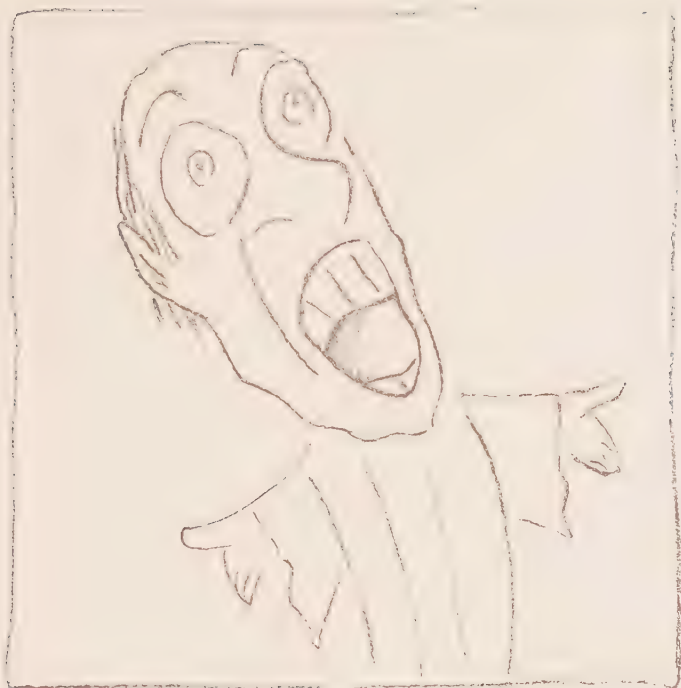
Musing on creeds, and each one's span,
The Red Knight gazed at the White Knight's man.
Gazed and muttered, "The sands run low,
And my heart is sick for a stronger foe."



Once they built a church in Hell,
 Ringed with poison-dripping shrines,
Where Religious Hate could dwell,
 Hymned by black divines.
Then, from Heaven, far and wide,
 Thunders crashed! and at the gate,
“*Let me in,*” Jehovah cried,
 “*I am the God of Hate.*”



Grandma Green got kind of queer,
Along about her hundredth year.
Taught her crocodillo, Jim,
How to bark a ribald hymn.



The Reverend J. Adolphus Bite,
He loved the Lord with all his might.
Ah, sinners, doth not this afford
A proof how patient is the Lord?



Here's Bishop Briskoe Pettifogg.
Is he in — or on — the hands of God?



“ Ho! halloa there! ” (“ What’s that rumpus? ”)

“ Tirra-lirra! Rub-a-dub! ”

Pan’s a-calling Mr. Pompous

From his club.

“ Brother, brother, don’t you hear me?

Scent the lovely dryads near me?

Spring is coming, Mr. Pompous.

Rub-a-dub!

“ All the gods are out,” he whistles!

Mr. Pompous merely bristles.



All day upon the cross he hung;
Then Jesus died.
But many a year Mankind has swung
And smiled, though crucified.

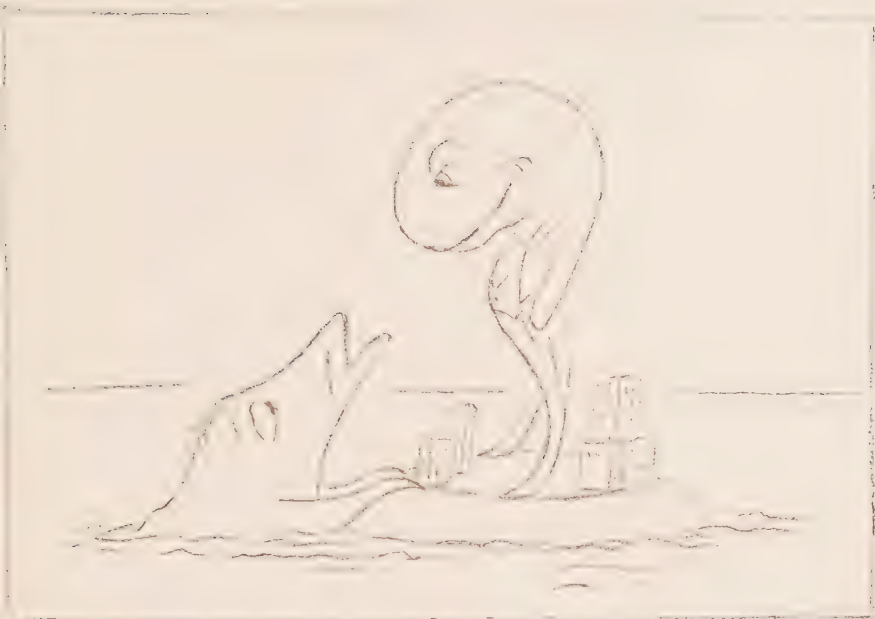
THOUGHTS ON DEATHS



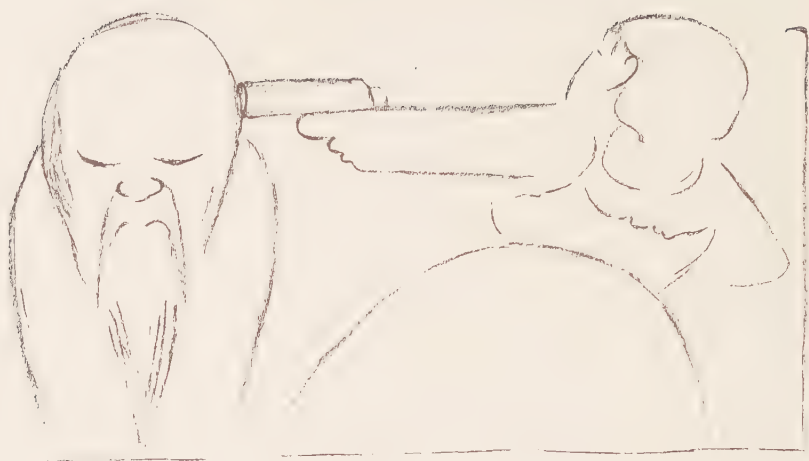
Who said Death was lean and grim
And an aristocrat?
Take another look at him.
Death is mean, and fat.



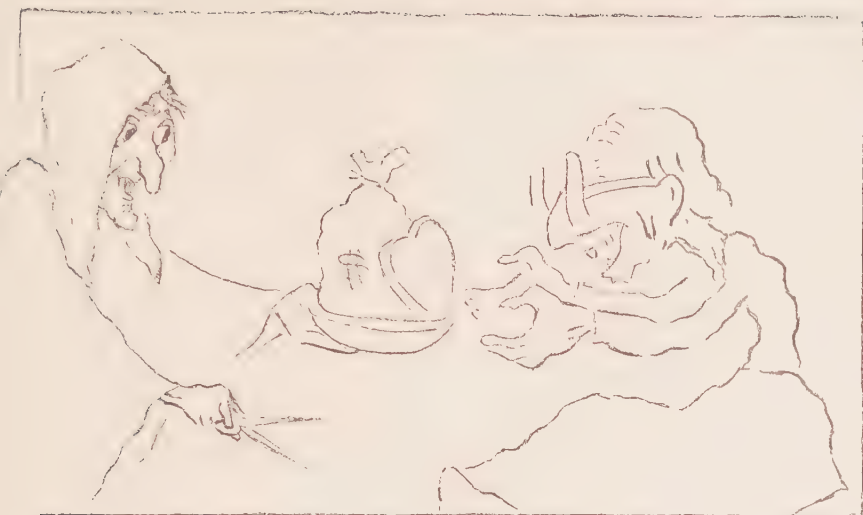
The spirit of old Mr. Waite,
It had to learn to levitate
And take the most unpleasant chances,
Because of Mrs. Waite's seances.



“ Oh what’s the way to Arcady? ”
Inquired a monster of the sea.
And smiling at that simple face,
Sophisto sneered, “ There’s no such place.”



Till death do us part



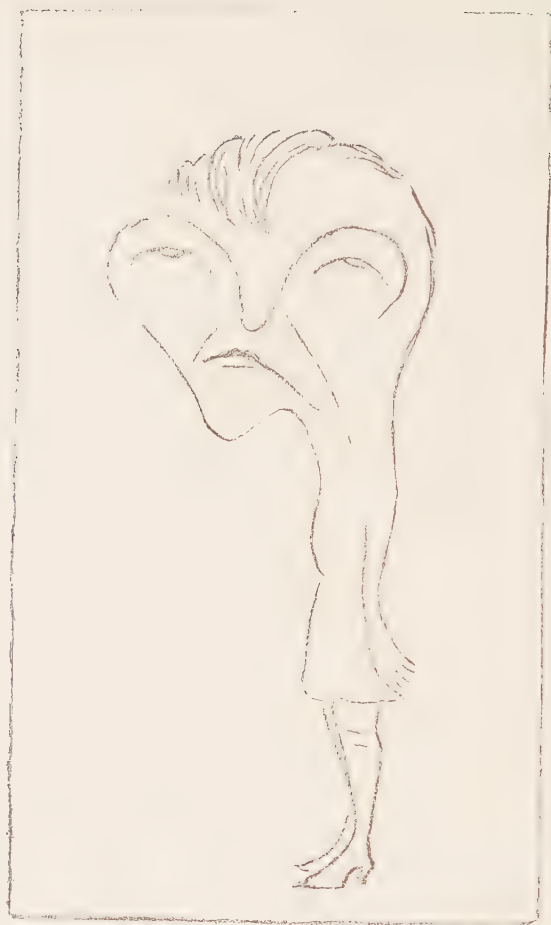
Everything comes to him who waits



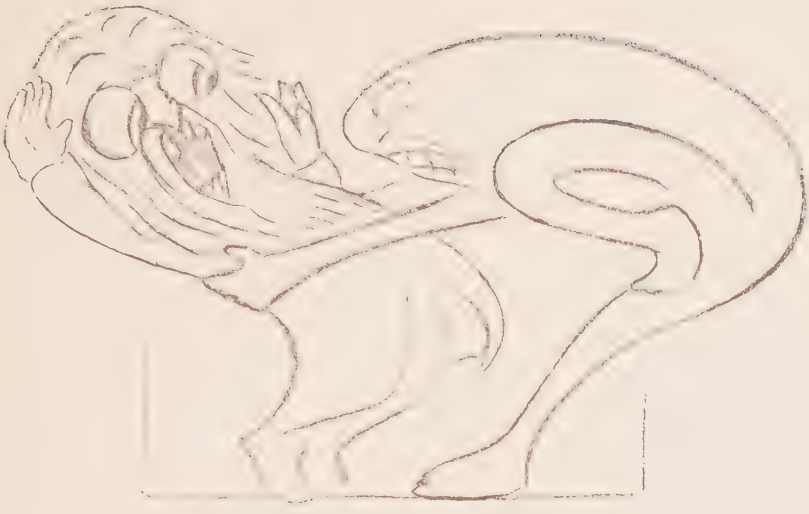
Never say die!



When eras die, their legacies
Are left to strange police.
Professors in New England guard
The glory that was Greece.



The Old Chorus-Girl



The old Librarian's leaving his books—
It's the King of Worms invites him;
But he's spent his days in sheltered nooks,
And to lie in the fields affrights him.

Now that all his life is past,
He must look at life at last.



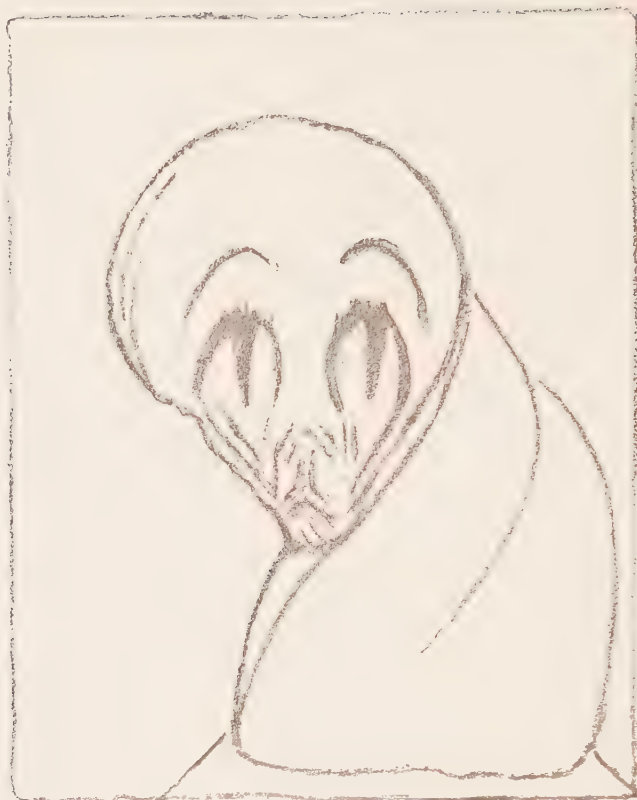
LONGEVITY

After the light had gone
Dim in his brain,
Dazed as he paced the wan
Valleys of pain,
Still something lingered on,
Shaky and blind;
Still his voice maundered on,
Empty of mind.

Loyal friends, sedulous,
Formed a patrol,
Shielding the posthumous
Shell of his soul.
Was there no traitor there —
Truer than most —
To slay that piteous
Physical ghost ?



Chrysalis



A Ghost was watching living men,
But could not understand.
“ Have they never heard of dying, then,
In this strange land? ”

BOOKS BY CLARENCE DAY

THIS SIMIAN WORLD. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1920. London: Jonathan Cape. 1921.*
(*Illustrated by the author.*)

THE CROW'S NEST. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1921.* (*Illustrated by the author.*)

THOUGHTS WITHOUT WORDS. *New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1928.* (*Drawings with captions, the captions chiefly in rhyme.*)

THE PLATES
FOR THE ILLUSTRATIONS OF THIS BOOK
HAVE BEEN MADE
BY THE GILL ENGRAVING COMPANY,
NEW YORK.

THE COMPOSITION, ELECTROTYPING, PRINTING AND
BINDING ARE BY THE PLIMPTON PRESS,
NORWOOD, MASS.

MILLS COLLEGE LIBRARY

BNF Thoughts without words,
817 D273th Day, Clarence, 1874-



3 3086 00095 9098

Mills College Library
Withdrawn

817

D273th

MILLS COLLEGE
LIBRARY

